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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

MAURY ISLAND NATURAL AREA RECLAMATION (From former mining operations)

What is the history of mining on the site?

There is a long history of mining on the site. Initial gravel mining operations began on the northeastern portion of the property along the bluff around 1902, peaking in 1917, and shut down about 15 years later. Gravel mining activities began again between the 1960's in the central area of the property, with peak production in 1978. The amount of and location of mining activities varied throughout the years; during the last 20- 30 years mining operations were very limited. Approximately 40 acres of the property had been actively mined over time, the most recently mined areas were limited to about 9 acres of the site.

What is reclamation?

Reclamation is defined as rehabilitation for the appropriate future use of disturbed areas resulting from surface mining activities. The major objectives are to prevent or mitigate future environmental degradation and reestablish, on a perpetual basis, vegetative cover, soil stability and water conditions to accommodate and sustain the approved subsequent use (for Maury Island Natural Area this is an ecological, passive recreation open space site). *Reference: King County Code 21A.06.957*

What regulations control reclamation requirements?

- Washington State requirements are codified in the Revised Code of Washington, Chapter 78, (Mines, Minerals and Petroleum) Section 44 (Surface Mining)
- King County requirements are codified in King County Code Title 21A (Zoning), Section 22 (Development Standards – Mineral Extraction)

Is King County responsible for completing reclamation of the Natural Area?

Yes. Per the conditions of the purchase and sale agreement, the County assumed the responsibility for complying with all permit requirements for implementing surface mine reclamation.

What kinds of actions will be required to address reclamation requirements?

Examples of actions that may be required are described below; final specific requirements have not yet been determined. All reclamation will conform to the State and County requirements once completed. Every effort is being made to harmonize reclamation with future use of the property within the overall context of the applicable regulations.

- Grading to:
 - create additional sloping and berms resulting in varied steepness and a sinuous appearance
 - eliminate over steepened slopes (not greater than 1.5 to 1)
 - restore natural drainage
 - provide stable slopes
 - eliminate safety hazards
- Addition/amendment of soils
- Revegetation with native shrubs/trees to:
 - reduce erosion, restore scenic values and, stabilize soils and enhance wildlife habitat
 - restore areas after structures have been removed
- Removal mining structures (consistent with other plan recommendations):
 - pilings and dolphins,
 - towers (consistent with other plan recommendations)
- Restoring/retrofitting internal roads to serve park purposes (trails, access to parking and other park amenities)
- Cleanup, topsoil and replant upper level of pit area.
- Installation of erosion and sediment control blankets

Map below shows areas that will most likely be priorities for reclamation actions:



Does the King County Department of Permitting and Environmental Review (DPER, formerly DDES) have regulatory responsibilities related to reclamation requirements?

Per state reclamation code provisions (RCW 78.44.390), King County Parks may request cancellation of the surface mining reclamation permit with the State since we don't plan to carry out any future mining activities, there is an active valid grading permit associated with this site and DEPR has agreed to assume regulatory authority over the site under the existing grading permit. Parks and DPER staffs are currently working to develop and submit such a request to the State (Department of Natural Resources).

What reclamation activities have been accomplished to date?

The former tunnels on site were closed off by the former owner prior to the County's acquisition. Some minimal grading was also conducted to "resculpt" some steeper slopes (drop offs) to address safety/liability issues. In addition, some work has also been done to address erosion on the maintenance access road.

When will reclamation occur?

The schedule for initiating the reclamation activities has not been specifically identified but the work will be coordinated with required soil cleanup actions. Therefore, it is unlikely that actual cleanup actions will not begin until 2014 at the earliest. Generally the maximum of time allowed to begin the reclamation work is five years after transfer of the permit from State to the County, that transfer process is currently in process.

What if I have additional questions about the soil cleanup at Maury Island Open Space Site or want to be added to a list for future updates and meeting notifications?

For specific questions about the reclamation process on Maury Natural Area please contact Fred White, King County Department of Permitting and Environmental Review Site Development Specialist II at: fred.white@kingcounty.gov via phone at 206-477-0363.

